



PAGAN *newsletter 1987*

Conservation of Pagan monuments

After a few days of rain in October 1986, the whole tower of temple No 433 caved in suddenly. The temple was already half ruined, as the northern and southern walls of its corridor, together with its vault, has collapsed long ago. The remaining part of the vault, on the eastern side, was destroyed by the earthquake of July 8, 1975. Up to 1986 however, the central rectangular shrine which is now buried below the debris of the tower, still had its Buddha image as well as mural paintings on its walls and under its vault. A fine example of stucco carving adorned the upper portion of the square tower.

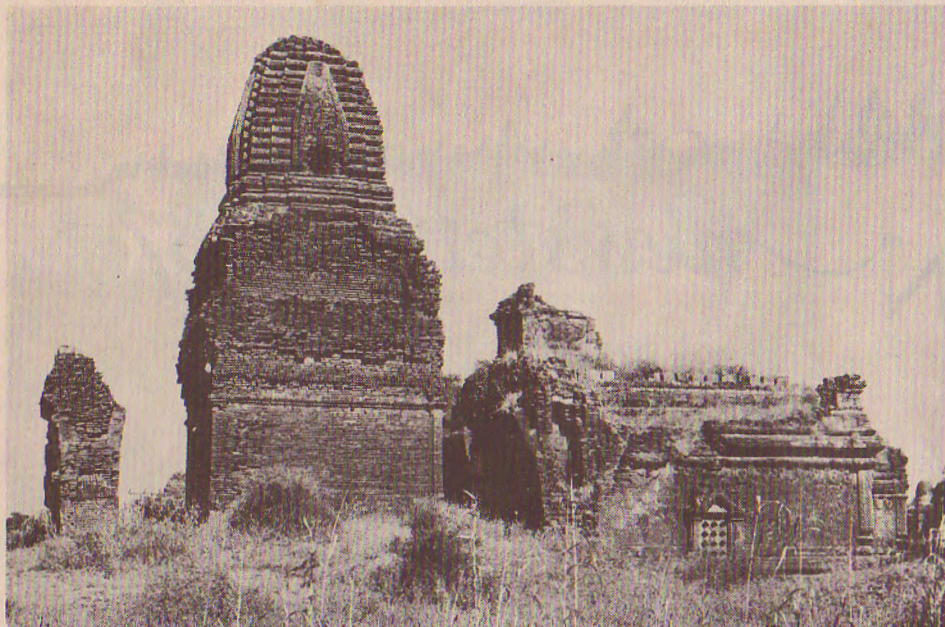
This sad collapse exemplifies the precarious condition of too many monuments in Pagan, and the urgency of systematical maintenance, repair and strengthening measures. To rebuild the collapsed tower can now result only in a modern copy, devoid of historical authenticity. Moreover, it would involve money and time which could be far better utilised to save other monuments from a similar fate.

But the lesson was learned, and the Department of Archaeology decided to undertake restoration work on a neighbouring temple very much in the same condition: the Hlaing She temple No 369, near Alopyi temple, is another early monument from the 12th century AD, of nearly the same size. Here again the vault of the corridor, except for its eastern side, collapsed long ago and the northern wall is totally destroyed. The western and southern walls, though still standing, are split by several open vertical cracks.

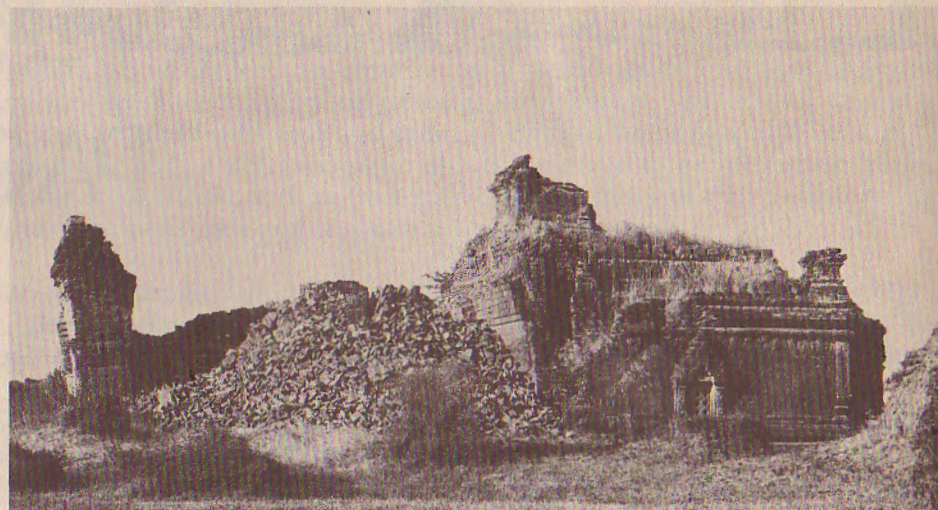
Reconstruction of the northern wall begun in 1987 from its foundations. After repairing the cracks, all walls will be linked together by a reinforcement belt, and the vaults of the corridor will be rebuilt on all sides. The monument will thus regain its structural integrity, and the upper masonry parts will finally be repaired and waterproofed.



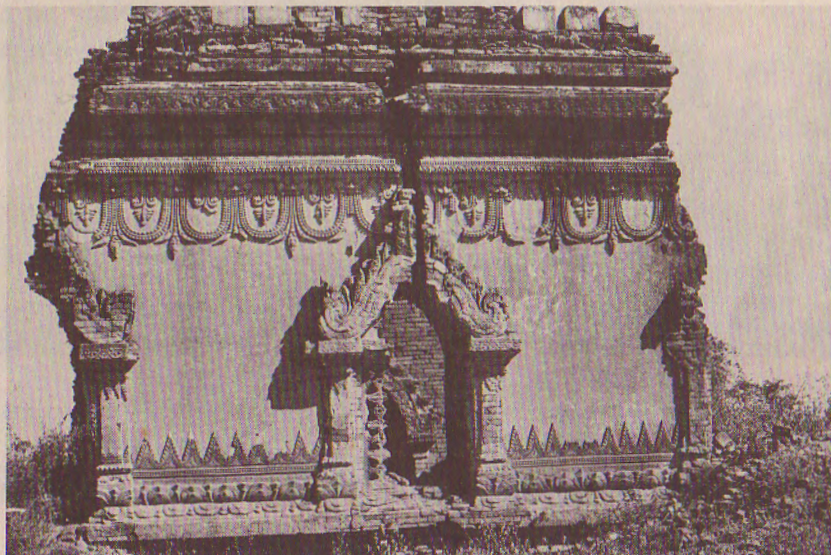
Hlaing She temple No 369, from North-West. Notice the solid central core, the upper storey and the square tower, presently isolated since the corridor vault has collapsed.



Temple No 433, south face, December 1984.



Temple No 433, same view, January 1987 after the collapse of the tower.



Temple No 433, west wall.



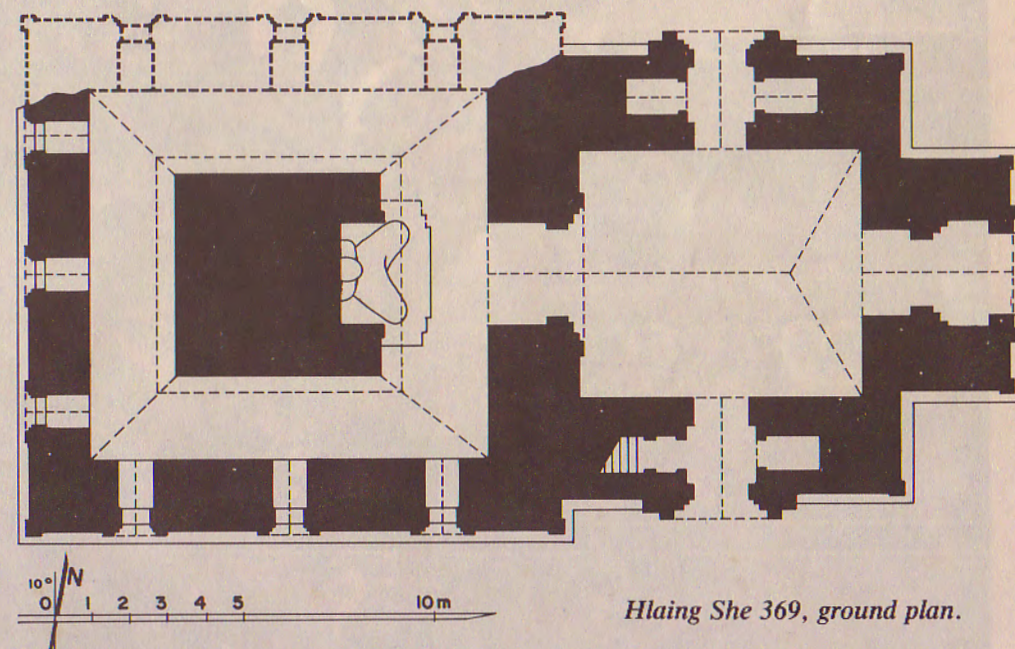
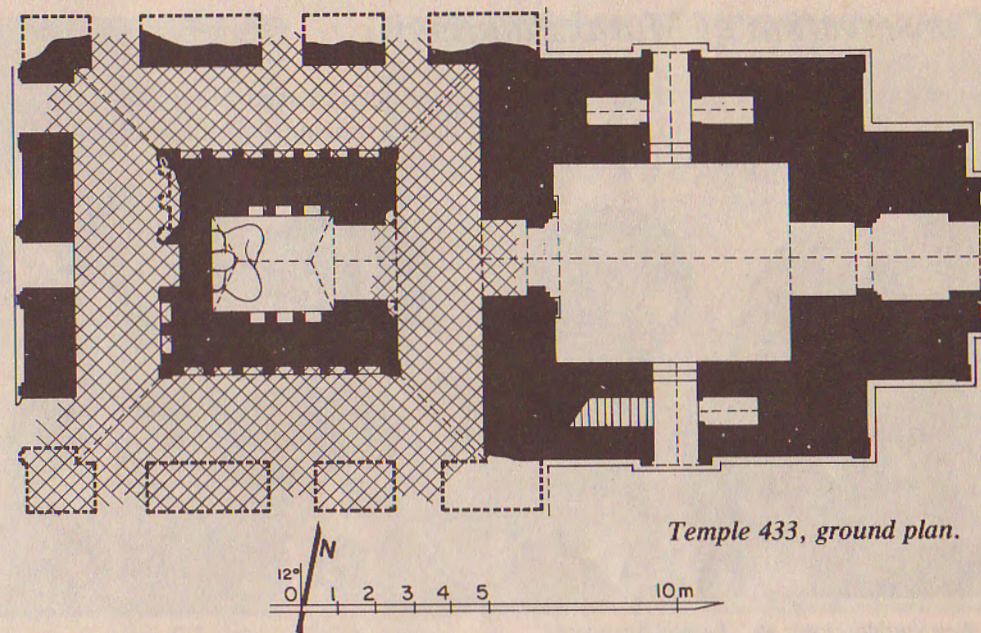
Temple No 433, west face of the square tower, December 1984. This fine stucco decoration is now definitively lost.

The western wall of temple 433, isolated by the collapse of adjacent walls and of the vault, has been leaning outwards for years, and is now more severely threatened by the pressure of accumulated debris. Its final collapse is only a matter of time. It will however be possible to save its fine stucco frieze and cornice by removing them for future conservation in the Pagan archaeological Museum.

Despite many similarities in general shape and design, each of the two temples has its own characteristics. On the ground floor, the main difference lies in the shrines themselves. The temple no 433 has its main image, a seated Buddha, sheltered in a small rectangular vaulted shrine located right below the central tower, whereas in the Hlaing She temple the central part is of solid masonry, and the main image is located in a niche on its eastern side. In the latter, it is in fact the eastern branch of the corridor which constitutes the shrine.

The vaulting systems also differ. In temple No 433, the entrance hall has a single barrel vault, whereas the corresponding vault of temple 369 is hipped on its eastern end. The corridor vault is a half-barrel in 433, but a three-quarter barrel in 369.

The independent small upper shrine, located on the roof of the entrance hall of temple 433, is a very specific feature which appears only on a few of Pagan temples, for instance on Kubyaukgyi 1323 in Myinkaba. The upper storey of Hlaing She 369 is of a more common type, with the shrine centrally located below the final square tower.



Hlaing She temple 369, detail of the corridor vault, east side, from north. Note the three-quarter barrel profile.



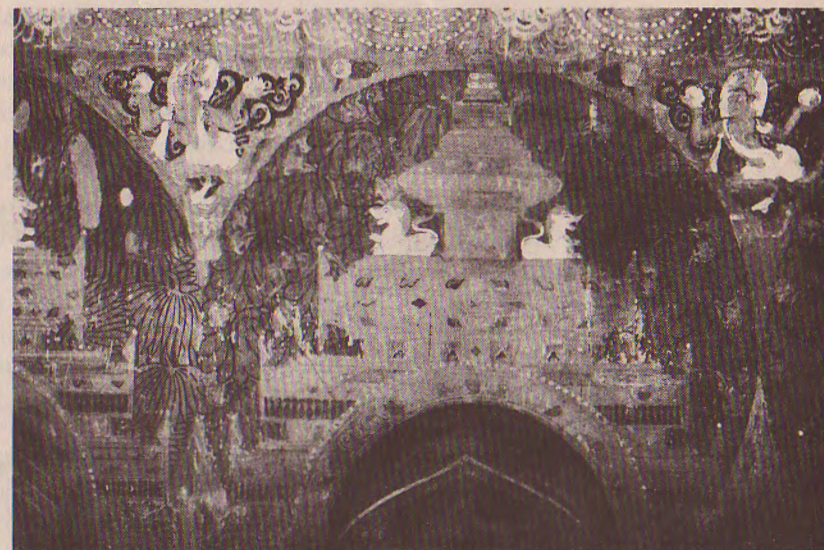
Hlaing she temple 369, detail of the pediment around the niche of the solid core, which will be preserved by the restoration of the temple.

Conservation of Mural Paintings

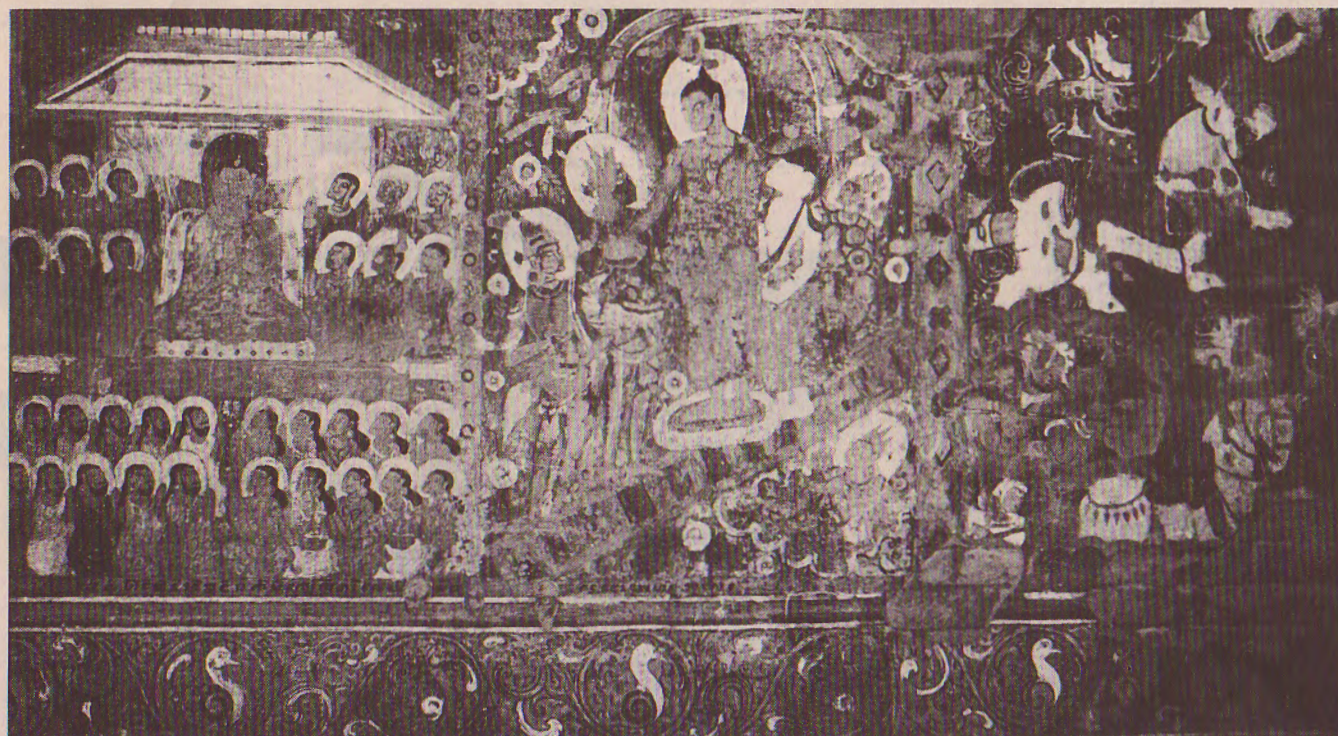
Some examples of the mural paintings which have been cleaned and treated in the Kuybyauk gyi temple No 1323 in Myinkaba, during training workshops organized by Iccrom experts with the Department of Archaeology.



West corridor, inner wall: faces of attendants.



West corridor, inner wall: crowning of a niche.



West corridor, inner wall: "at the mouth of the gate of the city, Sankassa, the Lord Buddha preaches the Law"
– "at the time of the Devas' descent".



West corridor, inner wall: from the Mara's army.



South corridor, outer wall: jataka 266.



South corridor, outer wall: jataka 514.



South corridor, outer wall: jataka 274.



South corridor, outer wall: jataka 426.

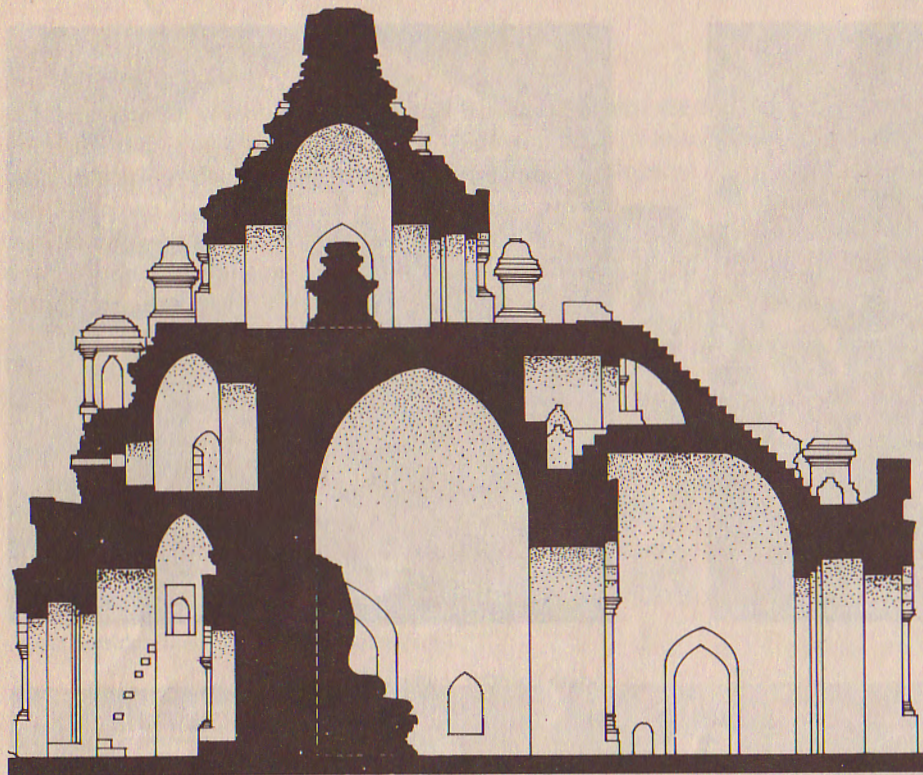


South corridor, outer wall: jataka 344.

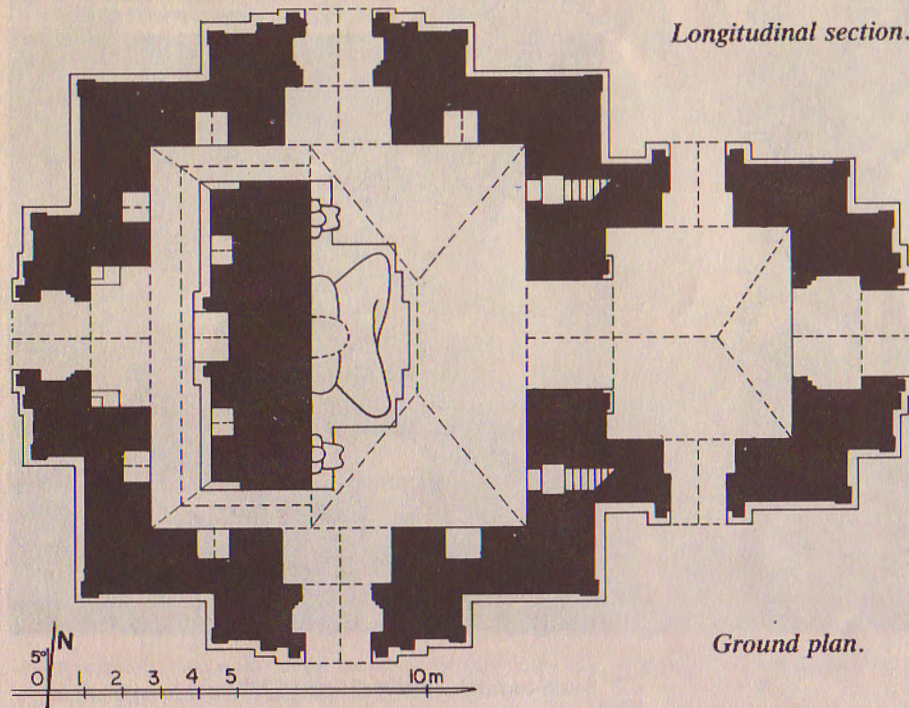


South corridor, outer wall: jataka 349.

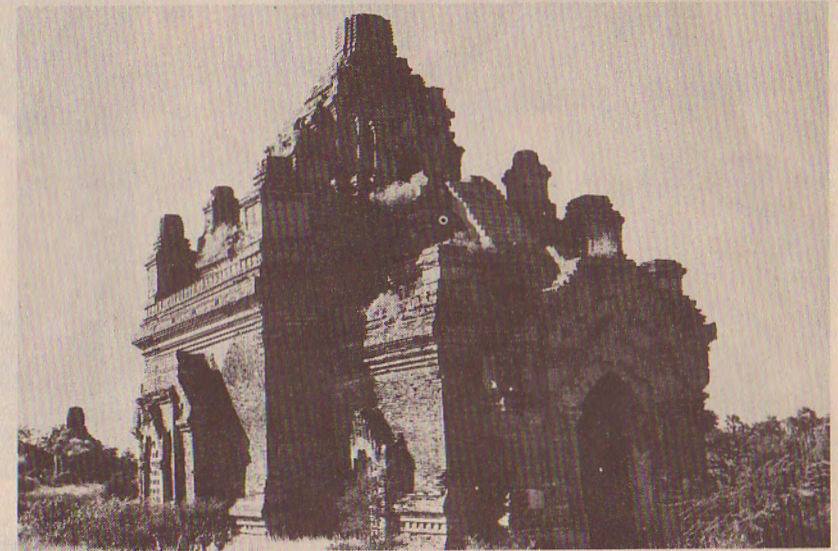
Presentation of a monument
THE KYAZIN TEMPLE No 1219 (555)



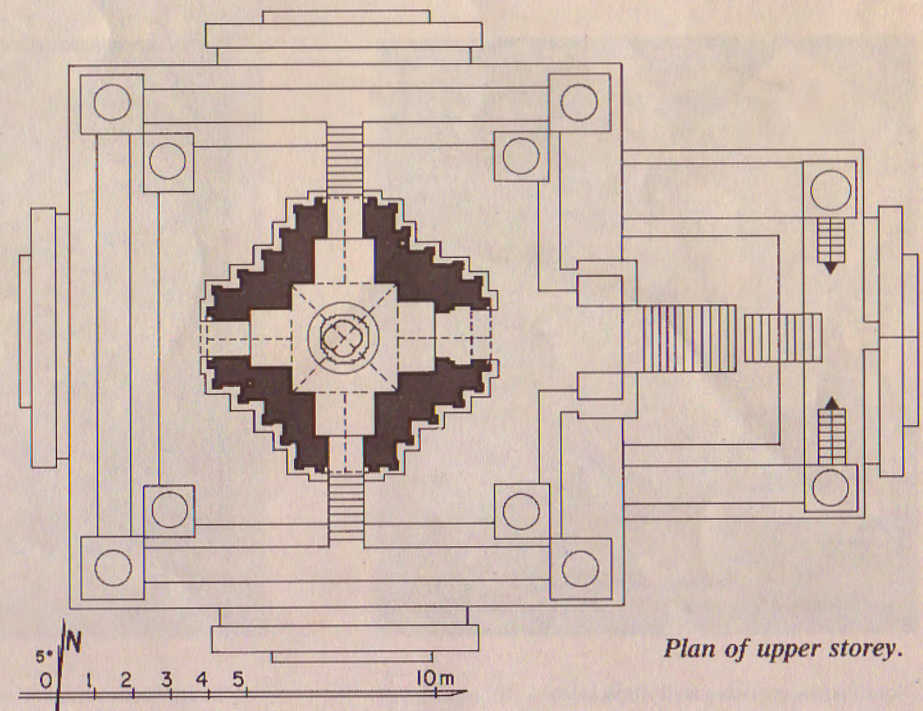
Longitudinal section.



Ground plan.



Kyazin temple No 1219, from south-east.



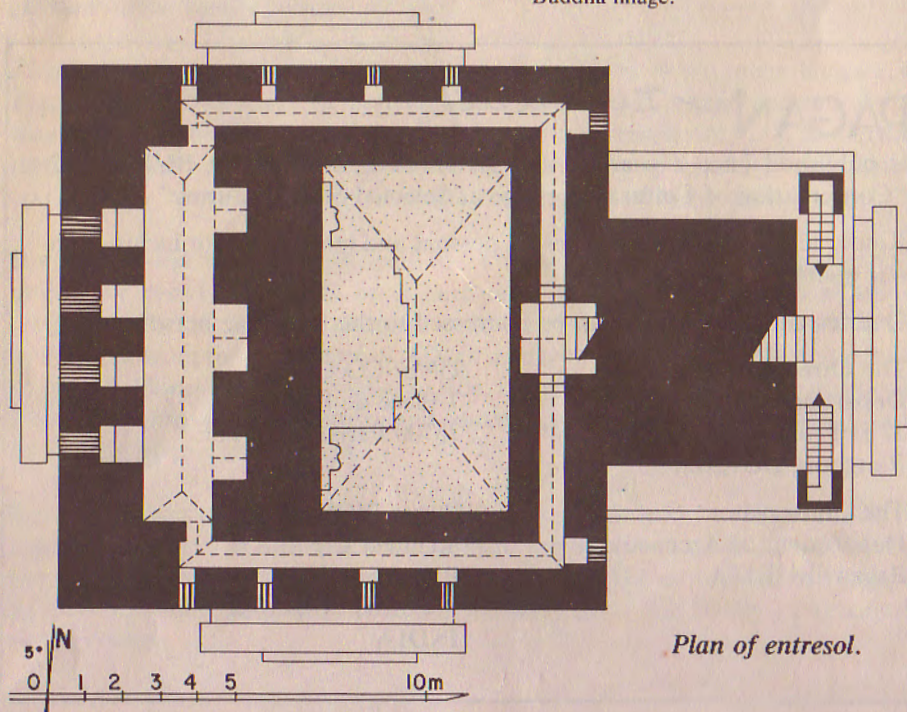
Plan of upper storey.



Kyazin temple No 1219, images from the south.



Kyazin temple No 1219, north-west corner of the shrine and northern seated Buddha image.



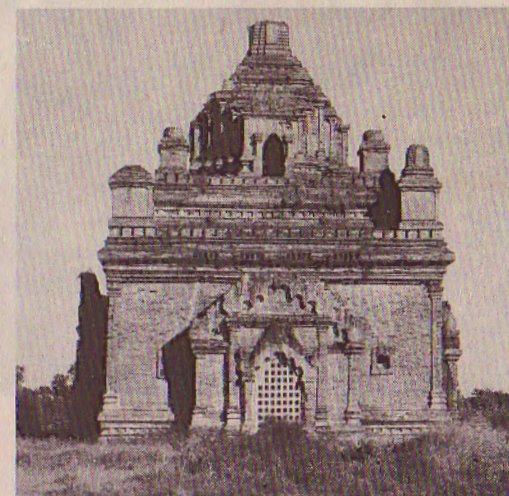
Plan of entresol.

The Kyazin temple stands south of Myinkaba village and east of Nagayon temple 1192. It is a medium-sized, two storeyed temple, with quite distinctive architectural features. The main entrance is in the east, through a porch and an entrance hall. On the ground floor, the shrine is rectangular, 10.12 by 5.65 m., and shelters three east-facing sculptures: on both sides of the usual seated and earth-touching Buddha, a Buddha is seated in European fashion. Behind the solid core and open on the western corridor, three niches sheltered standing images, today destroyed. The vaults above the interior space of this ground floor are unusually high, and traces of a timber floor can be seen at mid-level of the corridor walls. Access to this floor was provided by two wooden stairs in the western forepart.

Two vaulted staircases lead to the roof of the entrance hall, from which again other open stairs give access to the upper storey. Under this storey, there is a vaulted entresol, with its entrance on the eastern side under the main stairs, and a circumambulatory corridor whose western gallery is wider and decorated with mural paintings. This entresol is lighted by small apertures located at the level of the main cornice, a feature which does not appear in any other monument in Pagan.

The upper storey is built around a central square shrine open on all four sides. At its centre, a circular pedestal supported four Buddha images, seated back to back and today almost totally destroyed. Above the shrine is a square tower.

Two small empty niches in the walls of the entrance hall mark the location of lost stone inscriptions. On the western wall of the same hall, on both sides of the shrine entrance, are painted inscriptions, one in Burmese and one in Pali, now difficult to read. They state that the initial donor of the temple died in 1125 AD, and the building was at that date probably unfinished since another benefactor consecrated it in 1217 AD, and gave it the name of "the strong comfort of the three worlds" in 1223 AD.



Western face.



8 January 1987: filming restoration works on the base of stupa No 767.



A movie on Pagan

In January 1987, a film crew came to Pagan to record a documentary movie about United Nations sponsored activities in the area.

The film will mostly focus on conservation of the cultural heritage through project activities on monuments, mural paintings and museum. The monuments will be presented in their most lively and colourful context, that is during the time of the Ananda festival, which every year attracts thousands of people: whole families coming in their bullock carts from neighbouring villages as well as visitors from distant Burmese cities and of course tourists from abroad.

The more genuine aspect of daily life in Pagan will also be shown: agricultural production, harvesting, fishing, local and national river traffic, handicraft and lacquerware industry or traditional house building.

The team, consisting of Renée Scheltema, Michael Berkel and Denis van der Zaken, was assisted by officers from the Burmese Movie Picture Corporation, local branches of the Department of Archaeology and Construction Corporation, as well as by Unesco consultants involved in the project.

The film is expected to be available in 16 mm. standard and on videocassettes.

PAGAN *newsletter*

is published once a year by the UNDP/UNESCO project BUR/81/032 "Conservation of Cultural Heritage at Selected Sites in Burma".

Kindly send us names of interested persons and institutions for inclusion in our mailing list.

Queries and suggestions can be addressed to the following persons:

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